Claims 1, 3-10, 12-16 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Deiss. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 1 is directed toward the processing of a chain of database management messages. Each of the chains includes a plurality of management message members. Claim 1 recites the step of "creating a conditional block for each management message member of said chain, the conditional block indicating at least one of the following conditions: the management message member associated with the conditional block is to be processed without reference to all or part of other message members of the chain; the management message member associated with the conditional block is to be processed with reference to at least one of other message members of the chain." Claim 1 further requires that a subscriber database that receives a management message member perform the steps of "if the received message is subject to a condition, determining from said table whether the condition has been fulfilled" and "if the condition has not been fulfilled, locally storing said message and later processing the message when the condition is fulfilled." These steps are neither taught nor suggested by Deiss.

The office action relies on column 5, lines 11-63 of Deiss for this teaching. This passage of Deiss discusses two types of packets: packets with EMM and ECM entitlement data, which is conditional access data, and packets that include MPEG video data. The first type of packets with EMM and ECM data include a header with 128 bits arranged in 4 groups of 32 bits, with each of the groups of 32 bits being coded with a conditional access code. Deiss, col. 4, lines 11-15. Each subscriber is assigned a particular code. Col. 5, lines 15-16. A matched filter in the subscriber's set top box determines whether the subscriber's code is present in the header, and if the code is not present, the packet is not accepted. Col. 5, lines 17-23. Thus, the passage of

Deiss at col. 5, lines 11-30 that discusses the processing of packets of EMM/ECM data does not disclose the step of "if the condition has not been fulfilled, locally storing said message and later processing the message when the condition is fulfilled." Rather, in Deiss' system, if the user's conditional access code is present in the packet header, the message is immediately processed and the message is otherwise not accepted.

The step of "if the condition has not been fulfilled, locally storing said message and later processing the message when the condition is fulfilled" is also not disclosed in the passage of Deiss at col. 5, lines 31-42 that discusses the processing of packets containing video. Deiss discloses that the matched filter is arranged to detect 32-bit MPEG start codes in the video headers. Col. 5, lines 31-35. The office action presumably equates the start codes, and the absence of a start code, as conditions. Deiss discloses that if video data is lost, an MPEG video decoder can only restart decompressing video data an entry points that coincide with the start codes. Col. 5, lines 35-38. Therefore, if video data is lost, the decoder stops writing MPEG packets into the video memory after the loss of video data until a new video packet with a start code is detected, and then the writing of video data is resumed. Deiss, col. 5, lines 38-42. Thus, assuming *arguendo* that a video packet without a start code can be considered as having a condition requiring the processing of a previous video message, this passage of Deiss does not disclose the step of "if the condition has not been fulfilled, locally storing said message and later processing the message when the condition is fulfilled" because the video data received after a loss of data is not locally stored and later processed but rather is discarded.

Accordingly, Deiss' system does not perform the step of "if the condition has not been fulfilled, locally storing said message and later processing the message when the condition is fulfilled" with respect to either the processing of ECM/EMM messages or with video data. This

step is also not found anywhere else in Deiss. Furthermore, because there is no storage of message members in Deiss for later processing upon fulfillment of a condition, Deiss also does not disclose or suggest the step of "managing a table in the subscriber database, containing an information representing a processing state of each member of the chain" as required by claim 1. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and all claims that depend therefrom is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 10 and the claims that depend from it include limitations similar to those of claim 1 discussed above and therefore define patentable subject matter for at least the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 10 and its dependent claims is therefore also respectfully requested.

Independent claim 16 was not separately analyzed in the office action (see paragraph 12 of the office action). However, claim 16 includes limitations that were not found in the previous versions of claims 1 or 10. In particular, claim 16 recites "wherein said condition block determines a permissible order of processing of each management message member forming a chain of management member messages." This step is neither taught nor suggested by Deiss. With respect to EMM/ECM packets, the code in Deiss' system only defines whether or not the packet is intended for a particular subscriber and does not define any order in which the packets may be processed. Similarly, nothing in the video packets describes an order in which they are processed. Moreover, claim 16 has been amended to recite the step of "managing a table in the subscriber database containing an information representing a processing state of each member of the chain," which is neither taught nor suggested by Deiss for the reasons discussed above. Accordingly, claim 16 and dependent claim 17 also define patentable subject matter and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 18 includes limitations similar to those of claim 1 discussed above and therefore define patentable subject matter for at least the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 18 is therefore also respectfully requested.

In light of the above, Applicants submit that this application is now in condition for allowance and therefore request favorable consideration. If any issues remain which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants counsel, James M. Heintz at 202.799.4171.

Respectfully submitted,

DLA PIPER LLP (US)

/jmh41828/
James M. Heintz
Registration No. 41,828

500 8th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004-2131
Telephone No. 202.799.4000
Facsimile No. 202.799.5000